

# **EXHIBIT 47**

**From:** asranomani <asra@asranomani.com>  
**Sent:** Monday, August 10, 2020 6:01 PM EDT  
**To:** Barakat, Matthew <mbarakat@ap.org>  
**Subject:** FW: Petition to Gov. Northam to Stop Anti-Immigrant, Anti-Asian Efforts Related to TJHSST Admissions  
**Attachment(s):** "Petition to Gov. Northam FINAL.pdf"

Hi Matt, Here is the petition sent to Gov. Northam.

[https://www.change.org/p/ralph-s-northam-petition-to-va-gov-to-stop-anti-immigrant-anti-asian-efforts-related-to-tjhsst-admissions?utm\\_content=cl\\_sharecopy\\_24021926\\_en-US%3A1&recruiter=1140033016&utm\\_source=share\\_petition&utm\\_medium=copylink&utm\\_campaign=share\\_petition&use\\_react=false](https://www.change.org/p/ralph-s-northam-petition-to-va-gov-to-stop-anti-immigrant-anti-asian-efforts-related-to-tjhsst-admissions?utm_content=cl_sharecopy_24021926_en-US%3A1&recruiter=1140033016&utm_source=share_petition&utm_medium=copylink&utm_campaign=share_petition&use_react=false)

Here is the information I got from Qarni on all of the members of the task force:

<https://docs.google.com/document/d/1PU0NGsRVj407cyAz791jHo963fa22jqfgYQ6biVREc/edit#>

You can also describe me as a member of the new Coalition for TJ. Here is our press release on starting:

New Coalition for TJ Forms to Oppose Anti-Asian, Anti-Immigrant Efforts by the Virginia Governor's Office to Replace TJHSST's Merit-Based Admissions with Race-Based Policies

ALEXANDRIA, VA -- A local network of parents, students and community member has created an organization, Coalition for TJ, to advocate for diversity and excellence at Thomas Jefferson High School for Science and Technology, opposing new anti-Asian and anti-immigrant efforts by Virginia policymakers to replace the magnet school's merit-based, race-blind admissions policy with new race-based changes.

"We support increasing admissions of underrepresented minorities at TJ by building the pipeline to the school with advanced academic support to underrepresented minority communities. We are deeply concerned about the targeted bigotry being directed against the mostly Asian and mostly immigrant students and families of color at Thomas Jefferson High School for Science and Technology," the Coalition for TJ said. "We are extremely disturbed to learn that Virginia Education Secretary Atif Carney has held secretive meetings of a so-called 'task force' to determine the future of TJ admissions and the school itself -- with the blessing of Virginia Gov. Ralph Northam. This effort is at its very roots anti-Asian and anti-immigrant. We will not accept this war on TJ's mostly Asian and mostly immigrant families and students. We are here to support and celebrate all students."

For more information, contact [coalitionforTJ@gmail.com](mailto:coalitionforTJ@gmail.com).

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**Date:** Monday, August 10, 2020 at 5:22 PM

**To:** <atif.qarni@governor.virginia.gov>, <suptbrabrand@fcps.edu>, <akekeysgamarr@fcps.edu>, <aomeish@fcps.edu>, <rsizemorehei@fcps.edu>, <momclaughlin@fcps.edu>, <mkmeren@fcps.edu>, <tderenakkauf@fcps.edu>, <rjanderson@fcps.edu>, <klcorbettsan@fcps.edu>, <kvfrisch@fcps.edu>, <lhcohen@fcps.edu>, <sgpekarsky@fcps.edu>, <evtholen@fcps.edu>, <michael.bolling@doe.virginia.gov>, <Donna.Poland@doe.virginia.gov>, <BOE@doe.virginia.gov>, <district39@senate.virginia.gov>, <district10@senate.virginia.gov>, <district02@senate.virginia.gov>, <district36@senate.virginia.gov>, <DelLBagby@house.virginia.gov>, <DelDBulova@house.virginia.gov>, <DelEGuzman@house.virginia.gov>, <DelMKeam@house.virginia.gov>, <gsiegelhawle@vcu.edu>, <mgill@hcps.us>, <Fran.Bradford@governor.virginia.gov>, "Bonitatibus, Ann N" <anbonitatibu@fcps.edu>, Hala Al-tinawi <hala.al-tinawi@governor.virginia.gov>, Victoria Noles <victoria.noles@governor.virginia.gov>

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**Subject:** Petition to Gov. Northam to Stop Anti-Immigrant, Anti-Asian Efforts Related to TJHSST Admissions



Please forward to Gov. Ralph Northam.

August 10, 2020

Dear Governor Ralph Northam, Virginia Education Secretary Atif Qarni, Virginia State Legislators, Fairfax County Public Schools Superintendent Scott Brabrand, Thomas Jefferson High School for Science and Technology Principal Ann Bonitatibus, FCPS School Board Members Laura Jane Cohen, Tamara Derenak Kaufax, Karen Keys-Gamarra, Abrar Omeish, Megan McLaughlin, Melanie Meren, Elaine Tholen, Ricardy Anderson, Karen Corbett Sanders, Karl Frisch, Stella Pekarsky, Rachna Sizemore Heizer, the Members of the Task Force on Governor's Schools and other policy makers:

We are parents, students and alumni of Fairfax County Public Schools and Thomas Jefferson High School for Science and Technology, a Governor's School in Alexandria, Va. We are members of the Coalition for TJ, advocating for diversity and excellence at TJ. We are extremely concerned about a secretive and bigoted, anti-Asian, anti-immigrant effort by Gov. Northam, his cabinet and Virginia state education officials to undermine the admissions criteria, curriculum and future of TJ.

We are quite concerned about the existence of a Governor's task force, quietly created in July 2020 by Gov. Northam and Virginia Secretary of Education Atif Qarni, to recommend to the Virginia State Legislature changes to TJ and its admissions process, potentially replacing TJ's race-blind admissions process with race-based options including a lottery, quotas and an admissions adversity scoring bump to students from underrepresented minorities. This task force has been meeting without public information about its meetings. It is inappropriate to use TJ as a Petri dish for experiments in social engineering, and suggestions made by at least one of the members of Mr. Qarni's task force about potentially eliminating Governor's Schools such as TJ are downright reckless. We seek to increase the numbers of Black, Hispanic and economically disadvantaged students who gain admission to TJ, but we seek solutions that get at the underlying reasons for this phenomena rather than imposing shortsighted race-based solutions.

Policy makers must consider four key points:

1. First, TJ is not only an excellent school with a long tradition of providing a world class education for academically advanced students in STEM, but it is also a magnet for businesses, families and investment in Fairfax County, Virginia. US News and World Report ranked TJ the No. 1 high school in America, and it is a major reason that northern Virginia schools--and Fairfax County schools in particular--are regarded so highly by publications and by businesses, many of which point to the school system as a reason to locate in northern Virginia.

What better recommendation for a school district than to have the No. 1 high school in America? Given the importance of TJ to the region and state, we should not undermine the school. Do the Commonwealth of Virginia and northern Virginia now value social justice and equity of outcome more than academic excellence and a business- friendly climate?

2. Second, these changes will have a disproportionate impact on Asians and immigrants, who make up approximately 70 percent of the TJ student body. There can be no claims of this TJ overhaul battling "white privilege." There is simply no equitable or moral basis for this task force admitting certain students based on race and forcing out immigrants and other people of color who have gained admission to TJ based on merit.

There is a name for these policy considerations. It is called RACISM, and racial discrimination and "race leveling," which these efforts are clearly promoting, are unconstitutional. It is particularly galling to the Asian and immigrant members of this group that policy makers making decisions about the future of TJ are powerful and privileged US citizens, many of them white.

In short: we are outraged.

Many TJ families left racial prejudice, political repression, religious discrimination or limited economic opportunities in nations from Romania to India and China to find opportunity in the U.S. We are extremely disappointed to see discrimination and a plantation mentality coming from our adopted home country.

Many TJ families have suffered from oppression, racism, colonization, violence and poverty, with intergenerational trauma a reality. It is racist, bigoted and unfair for TJ's mostly Asian immigrant families of color and their students to be harassed and accused of "privilege," when they have simply been pursuing the universal value of education as a way to advance and then give back to society with service.

3. Third, these changes threaten to undermine the reputation and academic integrity of TJ by severing TJ's admissions from admissions based purely on academic merit. We have heard speeches by members of the Governor's task force that too many TJ students and families employ test preparatory services to gain admission to TJ and that Black, Hispanic and economically disadvantaged students may not be able to afford such testing. The solution to this problem (to the extent it is a problem) is simple. The Commonwealth or the counties in northern Virginia should provide discounted or free test preparatory services on a needs basis to local residents. Such practice taking tests will have benefits far beyond merely gaining admission to TJ.

Moreover, you are doing a disservice to Black, Hispanic and economically disadvantaged students by moving the goalpost of TJ admissions to allow them to gain admission. Admitting students who have not been able to gain admission through legitimate means will not make TJ any less academically rigorous, and we anticipate that many of these students will struggle academically or lead the school to revamp its curriculum to make it less academically advanced. A far better course of action is to improve the pipeline to TJ through the county's Advanced Academics Program, the Young Scholars Program, nurturing students from underrepresented communities, and other



initiatives to support these students.

High school academic excellence is attainable by all ethnicities and cultures if properly prepared at the lower grades, where changes are desperately needed. Preparing students earlier in the process by making the Advanced Academic Program accessible to more students and expanding the Young Scholars program, while maintaining academic rigor and high standards, will best prepare children of all communities for the future. That should be our collective goal.

4.

Finally, we question the legitimacy and lack of transparency of this task force. Secret task forces meeting in private under the guise of being “informal” smacks of back room political dealing and is grossly undemocratic. There should be transparency and much greater opportunity for public comment in this entire process that so importantly affects so many families in northern Virginia.

We urge you to take this letter to heart and let it serve as a warning. We will not go quietly. Your efforts to shame us will not work. We will continue to expose your efforts for what they are: bigoted, anti-Asian and anti-immigrant. We speak out unapologetically for diversity and excellence at TJ. Please contact us so we can assist you in finding solutions. We are reachable at [coalition4TJ@gmail.com](mailto:coalition4TJ@gmail.com).

Sincerely,

Signatories:

Govil Anoop

Ted Breinig, TJHSST Class of 2023 father and TJ PTSA volunteer

Suparna Dutta, TJHSST Class of 2023 mother and TJ PTSA volunteer

Jason Gan, TJSSHT Class of 2022 father

Lee Hsu, TJHSST Class of 2023 father and TJ PTSA volunteer

Helen Bowman Miller, Class of 2022 mother and TJ PTSA volunteer

Ting Liu, TJHSST Class of 2023 mother and TJ PTSA volunteer

Shibli Nomani, TJHSST Class of 2021

Asra Q. Nomani, TJHSST Class of 2021 mother and TJ PTSA volunteer

YL, TJHSST parent

Kate Liu, TJHSST Class of 2021 mother and TJAB volunteer

Lily Wang, TJHSST parent

Wendy, Wang, TJHSST parent

Yuyan Zhou, TJHSST Class of 2016 and 2020 mother

Zinnia Zhang, TJHSST parent

and additional signatories on Change.org